

Today, 43,000 Americans from all over this country are waiting for a transplant. Serious life-threatening illnesses, Mr. Speaker, just do not discriminate.

The greatest tragedy of all, Mr. Speaker, is that every day eight people die waiting for this donor organ. And that is not because they are not out there, it is because far too few people realize how precious a gift they can give before it is too late.

I would like to take this time, Mr. Speaker, to ask my colleagues to discuss the issue of organ donation with those they care about. Give someone the miracle of a second chance. Give the gift of life and become an organ donor. I just cannot tell my colleagues how much it meant to me.

REFORM LEGAL IMMIGRATION

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, our legal immigration system is broken and needs to be fixed.

It forces husbands and wives and their children to wait up to 10 years to join each other in the United States.

Also, the number of legal immigrants applying for supplemental security income has increased 580 percent over the last 12 years. That costs hard-working taxpayers \$4 billion a year.

And our broken legal immigration system drives the crisis in illegal immigration. Over 40 percent of all illegal aliens arrived as legal immigrants but overstayed their temporary visas.

To fix these problems, the Immigration in the National Interest Act, H.R. 2202, substantially reduces the waiting time for families to be reunited.

It also encourages legal immigrants to be self-reliant and discourages them from becoming a burden to the American taxpayer.

Help fix a broken immigration system and support the Immigration in the National Interest Act.

□ 1030

THE HOUSE MUST NOT TOLERATE A DOUBLE STANDARD

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, both Common Cause and I insist that in order to carry out the responsibilities of an outside counsel effectively, it is necessary for the counsel's authority and independence to be clearly and publicly established. The special counsel must have the authority and independence necessary to conduct the inquiry in an effective and credible manner. The House of Representatives, as well as the American public, deserve an investigation which will uncover the truth. At this moment, I am afraid

that the apparent restrictions placed on this special counsel will not allow the truth to be uncovered. "The rules normally applied by the Ethics Committee to an investigation of a typical Member are insufficient in an investigation of the Speaker of the House. Clearly, this investigation has to meet a higher standard of public accountability and integrity." Prophetic words, indeed, Mr. Speaker.

These are the words of the current Speaker of the House in 1988 referring to the investigation of a former Speaker of this House. This House cannot and must not tolerate a double standard. The Ethics Committee must follow the standard set by Speaker GINGRICH himself.

We need an outside counsel to investigate Speaker GINGRICH and we must not restrict the scope of that counsel's investigation. Let's get on with it.

WELFARE REFORM IN THE BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Pastor Bob Timberlake is like firelight in a home's window to Nebraskans left out in the cold.

He runs the Open Door Mission, a shelter for Nebraska's homeless. On any given night over 200 guests get emergency shelter at the mission.

But the mission's help doesn't come with no strings attached. Pastor Bob strongly encourages work.

The Federal Government doesn't do that.

As a result, welfare has decayed working-class society like sugar on teeth.

That's why our welfare reform package is so important. After a decade of promises, the Republican majority is delivering true welfare reform. It will enforce work. No more something for nothing. No more free lunch.

And like Pastor Bob, it maintains our safety net at the same time it requires some sweat equity and elbow grease.

Too many children in our Nation are not just trapped in poverty, but trapped in the destructive welfare state.

I believe those who care about them should embrace real welfare reform.

QUESTIONS ABOUT A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of questions that have been going on about the budget. Will we have a balanced budget? Will the Democrats go with the Congressional Budget Office numbers? When will the budget be balanced? Will the President,

in fact, offer a balanced budget? Will it happen this year? Will it happen before Christmas?

In fact, Mr. Speaker, there has been so much confusion about the budget that I told the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. KASICH] to go down to the CIA and get one of the palm readers down there to give him a prediction.

One thing we know, Mr. Speaker, is that we do not need a crystal ball to read this agreement right here that happened between the Republicans and the Democrats. It says, both sides, including and especially the President, are committed to a 7-year balanced budget.

"The President and the Congress shall enact legislation in the first session of the 104th Congress to achieve a balanced budget not later than the fiscal year 2002, as estimated by the Congressional Budget Office."

Not one person voted against this. This is what the discussion is all about, Mr. Speaker. Let us keep our commitments and follow this agreement.

A 50-PERCENT INCREASE IN STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM IS NOT A CUT

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to set the record straight concerning the student loan and Pell grant proposals in the Balanced Budget Act of 1995.

Mr. Speaker, contrary to what my colleagues may be hearing from sources on the other side of the aisle, Federal student loans are not cut. In fact, loan volume will increase by 50 percent over the next 7 years without imposing additional costs to students or parents. This amounts to an increase of \$12 billion in spending on Federal student loans through the year 2002; from \$24 to \$36 billion in 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, not only do Republicans increase spending for the guaranteed student loan program by 50 percent, but the maximum award for Pell Grants targeted to low-income students will rise to the highest level in their history, to \$2,440.

We have targeted the expenditures to those who need it most; not cut them. Democrats have barraged the airwaves to convince the public that Republicans are cutting Federal financial aid, but a 50-percent increase in the guaranteed loan program demonstrates that this is not the case.

COMMITMENT TO A BALANCED BUDGET

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, 18 days ago in the House of Representatives we passed a continuing resolution that had the language in it, that the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON]